

**Political History Collection
Interview H.0007.02 : Tape 2**

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Name: (Litang) Athar, Ngawang Norbu [Tib. (li thang) a thar ngag dbang nor bu]

Gender: Male

Age: 62

Date of Birth: 1931

Abstract

Ngawang Norbu [Tib. ngag dbang nor bu], also known as Litang Athar [Tib. li thang a thar], was a monk and trader in Bö. He was part of the first group of six Khambas taken from Kalimpong to Saipan in 1957 by the CIA for training. He was parachuted into Central Tibet in October 1957 to make contact for the Americans with Phala and the Dalai Lama. In this interview, he discusses starting the Chushigandru and his contact with Kelsang Ngawang about the Tibetan government's plans. He also details his work in Calcutta with the Americans and how they accepted his plans for support by offering arms and providing training for people. He describes being sent to Tibet, fighting at the Yadong check post and fleeing back through Bhutan. He talks about receiving the message from drönyerchemmo concerning the Dalai Lama's escape, as well as later meeting the Dalai Lama and accompanying him. Additionally, he talks about hearing of the Lhasa revolt, requesting the Dalai Lama to come to India and the reaction of the U.S. to this request. Finally, he discusses meeting a U.S. agent, going to Colorado for training and working for Indian intelligence.

Tape 2

A: Earlier, you know, the People's Association started? Well, the Chinese said that it had to stop and they did away with it. So to start it once again, Gombo Tashi said that they were going to offer a golden throne, to seek public religious teachings and perform long life rituals to the Dalai Lama.

Q: When?

A: It was done from the religious side and since the Chinese said that there was freedom in religious faith, this was used as an opportunity to begin the Chushigandru.

Q: Because it was not possible to actually organize it, right?

A: Yes, if they did it openly, then that was the end. They [the Chinese] could then see clearly that they were opposing them. So they [the Chinese] thought that they were going to do a religious offering to the Dalai Lama. However, internally, the organization was being formed. They went into the temple in the Andru's house and that's when the pledge was made in front of the Shri Devi, Palden Lhamo [Tib. dpal ldan lha mo]. So Chushigandru was pretty well organized. Gombo Tashi went to the Panglung Gyalchen to ask the oracle to go into a trance, I think it's Dorje Shungden, and asked for the prophecy. He asked what was the best course of action since the problem was getting worse and worse. The prophecy said, "On the 20th or 25th of the 4th Tibetan month, Sakadawa [Tib. sa ga zla ba];" something like that - anyway, it said "In the Sakadawa month you must leave for the outside, otherwise it will not be well to stay in Lhasa". So this was the prophecy by Dorje Shungden. On asking where was the best place to go, the deity said to the south.

Right after that, the two of us got a message [from the Chushigandru]. Usually there is a way to sent the signal or message [Tib. brda]. The message said, "The deity gave such a prophecy, so it would not be okay if we don't leave. We are going to make a firm determination and leave. Whether we are able to or not, there is no way left but the militant opposition. The Tibetan Government can't even make any moves; we are not able to do this intelligence work and then one day we will end up with handcuffs of the Chinese, so, we the Chushigandru have decided to leave and its better to go and so, the two of you, go and ask the Tibetan government whether you should go or stay and I [Gombo Tashi] am also going with two of you. So let three of us go and ask the Tibetan government. Since the deity had already made the prophecy and said to go to the south. The south is a small area of land, however the deity had already made the prophecy and so we have to go there". That's what they told us. So we said, "Well, that's

alright, the deity had decided and you all have made up your minds, there's probably no use for the two of us to stay around, however, lets go and talk with them [the Tibetan government]". The next day, we sent a message to the Magji Késang, saying that we are going to come the next day. So we went to see him and Jindak [Andru] told him, "We, the Chushigandru have consulted Dorje Shungden and he gave the prophecy and we have made the determination to go to Lhoka, there is nothing to think about. If the Dalai Lama and the government have any sort of blame to be put on, put it on us, the Khambas or put it on me, saying that I am the one who did all the wrong things and that I am the one who did it. Otherwise, if I stay around I can't be of any service. One day all of us are going to end up in the Chinese prisons, the government officials and all us Khambas are one day going to be chained and imprisoned and its plainly clear that we are all going to suffer under the labor. There is no other way out, so I am leaving. So if the Dalai Lama has to put the blame, then put it on me. If not, then please beg his pardon; I'm leaving. As for two of them were sent to mainly contact the Tibetan government. If the government has some plans then you can keep them. If not, then it's better that you all discuss what should be done". That's what said. So we said the same thing. That we were first sent to contact the government. We were not sent to Kham and we were told that the Tibetan government and all the Tibetan people will make a move. We thought that if the government makes a move, it was for this reason that we came and have waited till now, however, there is nothing being done, not even an instruction/order nor a plan. So if you are going to do something, then we have to stay since we must do the work that we were sent for and so we will stay. If there is nothing, then there is no use for us to stay and the two of us are also going to go with Gombo Tashi". So this monk official said, "Oh yes! go by all means, we can't do anything at all. Even after Gombo Tashi leaves, we still can't do anything, so you must in any case go with Gombo Tashi, we can't bear any responsibility". So I said, "Kungö, this is your final order, so please give it to us in writing. The reason is that Phala Drönyerchemmo instructed us to meet with you and so whatever order you gave us, we need it to send message to the people that sent us". So we received in writing, we took it down and immediately sent the message to America. It said, "We were leaving, that they said that they are not going to do anything and have told us to go, so we are going". . So they [America] said, "Alright, go ahead and whatever the situation is in the south, whatever plans or goals you have, inform us".

So, we are now in 1958, I think, and on the Sakadawa month, day 16th, we left Lhasa for Lhoka. So for a month we stayed at Lhodra Kalung [Tib. lho brag bka' lung] Estate. About 20 days later the Chushigandru fighters all came to Driguthang. The place is just a plain. So we told them [Khambas], "Stay there in Driguthang and don't come to where we are. That area is a valley , since there will be a lot of difficulties for the miser. So at Driguthang there were about 2600 to 2700 horsemen.

Q: Two thousand?

A: Yes, more or less than two thousand, I can't remember exactly at this moment. They were saying something like 2700 or 2800, anyway we used to talk about some 700 or 800. So we went there with Gombo Tashi. So on the 6th month, day 16th, 1958 we had a military ceremony [Tib. dmag don rten 'brel] . So everyday we sent reports back to America of what was happening. When they asked how many people there were- yes, we said that there were about 2700 including the sentry guards and the soldiers that was spread up and down, that's right. Then they told me to come via Yadong and through Gyalo Thöndup and come with whatever plans two of you have, the plans of Gombo Tashi. Then we will meet in Darjeeling or Kolcutta and consult with Gyalo Thöndup". So I said, alright and immediately got ready to leave for India. Then for three days we wrote up our plans according to the way we were trained in America and we wrote about 26 pages. We couldn't tell everyone in the Chushigandru, but they had about 5 or 6 people and they wrote up their plans. Even in the Chushigandru there were in the beginning only 5 to 6 people who knew that we had this American connection. So I brought the two plans and came secretly through Yadong. There was this person who used to live behind this house, who later was sort of my servant. He was kind of muleteer and took the animals and I took his pass and came through Yadong. At this place called Rinchengang [Tib. rin chen sgang], there is a Chinese check post, where they check for the passes. So I came through that and on this journey I had no trouble. At Darjeeling, we met Gyalo Thöndup and he looked at the plans. Chushigandru had this elaborate plan that would probably not go well and unacceptable with the Americans. They wanted many large arms that could not be put on horses and mules. So Gyalo Thöndup, I think, made a little bit changes. So , regarding our plans he said "Two of you have made it, so you give it to them". He didn't made any changes and said that you can tell them about your plan. Yabshi's clerk, Trunyila [Tib. drung yig lags] [note: Lhamo Tsering] was sent as an interpreter to Kolcutta. He also did not know English every well. He spoke in Chinese. There was an American who spoke Chinese very well. So from the time I was sent with him to the time we reached Calcutta he wrote down all that I had been doing, even the people that I met. He also made an enquiry on all the wireless message that we had sent. Then he asked us what we thought and so we both told everything. Then he asked us to comment on the plans, which we did. All together, it took about 10 to 12 days. We took one day off. He said that looking at the plans, he thought that ours was better and that probably help could be sought on that. He has to consult with the government and could not decide on his own. He said that he will return in 6 days and if not then in 8 days. Six days later, exactly, he arrived. He said, "Whatever is in your plans, on this we have decided to help. The Chushigandru plan is a little too elaborate. For example, howitzers and large arms that they had heard of during World War II, if these were given, then how are you going to transport them?" Two of us planned arms request were only those that could be taken on horses and foot and they said that they will help with all arms that can be carried on foot. Then, most importantly, we had drawn up a plan to train 500 persons. Another important thing was that we need about 60 people to be trained in wireless communication. We need about 20 groups of wireless operators with 4 persons in each group. At the least, 3 in each group. Without this we cannot survey the various areas. Then, most importantly, we had requested that they train about 400 of us in guerrilla warfare and in using, dismantling and reassembling the arms. When the US drops arms we needed people who knew how to handle the items and teach the soldiers. Likewise, whether it is grenades or whatever arms and equipment we need people to immediately know how to put these to use and teach the other soldiers. So we said they must take not less than 500 of us. So they were very happy about this and said that this plan was excellent and that we will try to execute this plan soon. Before that, we had sent 16 people and they were held up in Kalimpong. So we said we want to send them and that we will bring them down and send them to you for training. And then every month about 30-50, as many as we can, we will send. So they agreed to this and said that gradually they will send all the arms and ammunition. So they agreed to send us all the arms and medical supplies, all the supplies that can be used on foot and used for guerrilla warfare.

So at the time, I was to return, Gyalo Thöndup said that you must come to see me since I have some things to tell Gombo Tashi.

So when you return don't take the plane but come and see me. So, I said, all right. At that time, they [Americans] were saying that they would drop me into Tibet if I want to. For me it was faster and less hassles but Gyalo Thöndup was asking me to come, so once again I went from Kolcutta to Darjeeling. So I stayed at Darjeeling for about a week since I had some worms in my stomach and received medication. Then I returned and there was a Litangpa who used to take photos. Gyalo Thöndup and others told us to teach him [photography] when we were going down. If we didn't have a photographer and a film shooter, the two of us couldn't manage since we had to send wireless message and other works. So we taught him and took him with us. When we got to Yadong we had no passes [permits] from the Chinese. By that time, one needed passes to return to Tibet. There were Khambas who were going from India to fight. So we were stopped at Yadong Governor's Office, Trojikhang [Tib. gro spyi khang] where previously the Tibetan government used to check the passes. So we tried but they would not let us through. When we said that we were going to return [to India], they would not let us. So they said we have to do some study there and they were about to arrest us. So I had a gun in my pouch and so did my companion. And so this ended in a fight and a shoot out. We had at Kalimpong this person who was trained as a doctor [medic] for Chushigandru, the brother of the one who takes pictures. My companion had told him that we were coming to Gangtok and so he was waiting for us at Gangtok. Poor guy! he was shot by the Chinese that day. That day, he knifed the main Chinese check point inspector on his stomach. We killed about 4 Chinese and one of our companion was killed. So the 3 of us got through but he was killed that day. Poor guy, he was sent by the Chushigandru to be trained at Kalimpong to give injections and to attend to wounds. He was to return. So we couldn't proceed and fled down once again to India and there Gyalo Thöndup arranged for permits through Bhutan. At that time, Gyalo Thöndup was friendly with the [Bhutanese] Queen of Trashö [Tib. drag shos] Trashö Rani at Kalimpong.

Q: Was it the Prime Minister, Trashö Silön [Tib. srid blon]?

A: You know she was the mother of the Silön. So Gyalo got the permit from her and my horses and mules were taken by a Bhutanese servant through Sharsima, the 3 of us went downwards through Bhutan Zayugang to Patro, then Thimphu [Tib. thim bu] and then Gasadzong to Tibet. On the way I met the Kumar Sahib, the one who is married to your older sister, the Bhutanese Prime Minister. I met him at Patro Dzong. He asked me who I was and at that time I was not permitted to say anything. Since I was coming with Yabshitsang, their servants, he thought I was their relative or something like that. So I told him that I stay at Yabshi Estate, at Jayü [Tib. bya yul] Dzong and so I am going to look after the estate. So he said whatever supplies you want, meat, butter, tsamba, come and get it. But, I didn't go to get any. At Thimphu, Sandhu Lo Nyendra's [Tib. sa 'du blo snyan grags] and his servants who were travelling from India to Tibet to fight were there. So Lo Nyendra did not know who I was and this is what I told him. So he asked me where I was going. I said, "I was going as a messenger for the Chushigandru. To Kumar Sahib I did not tell him that I was a messenger. He [Lo Nyendra] asked me where I came from and so I said that I came from Kalimpong and did not tell him anything else. So we said lets go together and were together until we reached the Tibetan border. When we got to Tibet, just before that a plane had come where my companion was. I had said that they should send a plane load since a lot of them had gone to the north led by Jindag. My companion had sent a message when I was at Kolcutta. It said that some of the people who were with me had some weapons had gone to the North with the little arms that there were. I have no soldiers here that are well equipped and I don't have weapons to guard the things and so you must send some weapons for guarding the wireless operator team [Hin. tar. Tib. tshogs]. So the plane dropped more than 100 guns called Tashi Kharing, 20 stenggun, 2 cannons and some hand grenades for guarding the wireless operator team. So they dropped arms for one company [of soldiers]. Some Indian money was also dropped for those who were to be sent to India to be trained. About 2.5 lakhs of Rupees were dropped. All the arms were taken to Tsethang where the fight was on. Rattru Ngawang took them and all the arms were taken to Tsethang. Forget about having arms for defence. When I went there, we were about 16-17 horsemen and we were not properly armed. So we send a message asking for another arms drop. So the second plane was sent and they dropped the same amount as the previous one. So after I got there, there were two shipment of arms.

So while we were staying like that, and after the arms were dropped, we took the things that was dropped and went to Lhuntse Dzong. When we arrived at Lhuntse, from Central Tibet, Phala Drönyerchemmo sent an edict through a messenger. He said, "In Lhasa the uprising [on March 10th 1959] took place and the Dalai Lama is prepared to flee and he is on the way and for this reason please get in touch with the Americans and the two of you must come as close as possible". Since the edict came through the Chushigandru Headquarter, a long distance, it had already been about 4 days when we received that. So as soon as I got the edict I sent a wireless to America telling them of the letter that we received and asking them what we should do. They said to go to them immediately and find out in detail. If the Dalai Lama is escaping then you two must serve as best as possible and let us know so that we will see what we can do from our side. As soon as I got the message at around 8 p.m. I got 7 servants ready, horse and arms, and divided into two wireless operator teams. I told my companion, "Whatever spare arms we had, do not divide and waste them and bring them with you and come later. I am going ahead and I will send back about 100 unarmed men and so you arm them and come later in a fit manner [Tib. sra thang thang], otherwise if the Dalai Lama is escaping and the Chinese are in pursuit then we will have a difficult time to stop them if we are not well armed. So come later and I'm going ahead to see where the Dalai Lama is". So immediately I took 7 horsemen and left, the Dalai Lama had already come to Chongye Riudechen [Tib. 'phyongs rgyas ri bo bde chen]. We were far away at Lhuntse Dzong and we went for a day and a night. While we were taking time to drink tea the horses were allowed to graze. When we got to Yartö Dragla [Tib. yar stod brag la] Mountain Pass, and before we were about to descend, the two tutors and the Great Mother of the Dalai Lama, Gyayum Chemmo [Tib. rgyal yom chen mo] were coming up. One of our Litangpa was there as their servant. He was a soldier. On asking him how things are faring he said that the Dalai Lama is coming later and that they came ahead and I came to assist them.

So we had an audience with the two tutors and they asked us where we were from. I said that I am a soldier from the Andrutsang group. We didn't say anything else. We had excellent arms and so they felt kind of strange and kept looking at them. Our uniforms made no statements since it was the ordinary soldier's Khamba dress. Then as I reached the summit of the pass at Chongye Riudechen, the Dalai Lama was coming up. Drönyerchemmo was not together. So I stayed below the path and we did not know the Dalai Lama since we had not met him. He looked carefully at our arms and he held his horse and enquired as to where we were from. We said, "We were from Lhuntse Dzong and belong to Andrutsang's group and we received the edict to come to receive you, so we had come to receive you". So he must have thought some and said, "Yes, Yes". Then we said that we wished to meet with Chemmola [Phala]. The drönyerchemmo was called Chemmola [Tib. chen mo lags], right? [TN note: Normally,

drönyerchemmo was called chemmo, not chemmola. Chemmola is called only for those master craftsmen] The Dalai Lama said, "Yes, Yes, he is behind us". That day, I heard that Surkhang Wangchen Gelek [Tib. dgang chen dge legs] and Chemmo had some problem with the Chushigandru. Probably, the Chushigandru and Namseling had some verbal quarrels in the Chongye Riudechen. So the two [Surkhang and Phala] were behind giving them some advice to make them get along well. When we stayed there for awhile making tea, the drönyerchemmo and those leaders came. Drönyerchemmo knows us and he said, "It is excellent. It is well done" And I told him about the things. Then when we came along, at the side of Yartö Drala, there is a branch monastery called Ganden Chöling [Tib. dga' ldan chos gling] or something belonged to the Senior Tutor Ling Rimpoché [Tib. gling rin po che] and the Dalai Lama stayed there that night. When we returned, the Dalai Lama had already gone to bed probably. So they said that tonight it will be difficult to seek an audience but to come early the next day and we will request for the audience.

So that night, we stayed outside since there wasn't any place to stay. Early next day we went early and some other people were sent in before us. Later we went inside and told him about us. He said, "Thank you, you consult with the drönyerchemmo and we will meet". So from then we were together. When we passed the Yartö Drala, the 100 unarmed men that I had requested came up. My companion brought the arms and arrived at Ei Chundokyang [Tib. e qu mdo kyang]. So we all met there. On top of the Yartö Dragla Pass, the Kashag went into session. So we were stuck there for quite sometime while they were in session. When we came down, my companion was pitching a tent and the Dalai Lama had already come to Ei Chundokyang. So we and drönyerchemmo also arrived there. So the arms were distributed to the soldiers and all the preparations were made for accompanying the Dalai Lama. So the Dalai Lama told the two of us to come in. We told him the whole story. Then we wired the Americans saying, "We met the Dalai Lama and that they are at this place according to the map. That there is no danger from the Chinese at this moment". So we made a full report. They [Americans] replied saying, "Congratulations to the Dalai Lama that he is out of danger and he had arrived safely at Ei Chundokyang. Please let us know directly whatever help you need". So this was the message we got and we told the Dalai Lama about it. This was briefly stated in his autobiography (must be the Tibetan "My Land and My People"). He said something about having heard news from his foreign friends when I arrived at Ei Chundokyang. I think he was referring to this.

Q: The early autobiography, right.

A: Yes, the early one. The next day when drönyerchemmo and us arrived at Shukophug [Tib. ?]. In the beginning, we prepared for the Dalai Lama to stay 1-2 months in Lhoka. So drönyerchemmo said, "If there is some danger, then will the Americans be able to send a plane right away? Can planes land? We said, "Of course, the planes can land, we were trained in this. The planes can land in water, on land, during rain and wherever. We were trained and in Tibet the planes can land anywhere. However, we can't make any decision. You have to be very decisive and talk with a country and I don't think you can say if at such and such time if something takes place, then is it possible to do something. If you want to go and you have to decide to go and talk about this. Till now you have dilly dallied around and now after bringing the Dalai Lama and escaping and having arrived so far, if you still dilly dally around, then, is there any use? Don't you think that now you should give some definite information to the Americans? Don't you think that it has now come time to ask for arms or whatever? You have left Lhasa and there is no way of trying to work things out through friendly relation. Now, it has come time to fight and so don't you think its time to make definite plans. So isn't it the time for asking for the help on peaceful point and military?" Then he said you are right and so we sent a message saying to help us both on military and peaceful point. The reply was, "Yes, whatever the wishes of the Dalai Lama we will give 100% backing. We will help 100 % and do whatever we can". You know, they said that they were going to back 100 %. Yes, they said it! So I told them that they are saying that they were going to back 100% so, ask whatever you want. The Americans said that they were going to back 100% that even if you want bodyguards [gusung], they will send. So when they said that they were willing to send bodyguards they were probably even going to send American soldiers if one asked. I thought that generally, when the head of a country like the king of Tibet requests protection because of difficulties, maybe there was some system for doing that. So when the Americans said that they were going to back 100% we were saying that we will let you know gradually as we make the plans. The Americans said all that to us, you know. As far as the plane landing is considered, we have been trained in it and when the Dalai Lama is in such difficulties if a plane can't land then what's the use. Plane landing is very easy, it will come from Bangladesh, and can even land at night. We were trained for that- what kind of field is required, how it is going to land and after landing what has to be done. So in Tibet there were so many locations and it is very easy to land. All you have to do is take about 100 soldiers and move some rocks here and there and they can land. The land in Tibet is hard and there are no mud where the plane is going to get stuck. Finally, if the government had done that it would have been good.

Now, when they arrived at Lhuntse Dzong, they said that they were going to form a new democratic government, unlike the earlier one. So they had a celebration regarding that. So I send a message saying that they have started this new democratic government, unlike the old one in Tibet. It was not only in India but they also formed a new government in Tibet. The two of us fired cannons. My friend was good at firing cannons and I left to go on top of a hill to send a message. I laid down a whole day on the hill and informed them on what was happening and they immediately sent their congratulation. So that evening I went and gave them wireless messages.

Q: So at Lhuntse Dzong, the Americans were not saying anything about starting a new government?

A: No, the Americans were not saying anything. We were telling them that we were forming one.

Q: Americans were not saying anything about holding on to a land and starting a new government?

A: No, nothing of that sort. They never said to hold on to a land and start a new government. What the Americans were telling us was not to loose territory and try to hold on to [Tibetan] land. That was always the order.

Q: Hold on to territory?

A: Yes, it was nothing specific regarding the Dalai Lama but to us the Chushigandru, the militant organization they had constantly been saying not to loose the Tibetan territory.

Q: So they were saying don't loose the war and run away but hold on to some land.

A: Yes, and at Bangladesh their planes had probably come since there were arms ready to be dropped for 2000 soldiers and it had reached Bangladesh. When they said that they were going to drop tonight or the night after, we lost the territory. We lost the first drop zone, then the second, then the third. So we said not to drop tonight, then the next night and the next night and didn't let them drop and put a stop to it. Later, they were pretty happy about it because if they had dropped, then it would land in the hands of the Chinese and we could not stop their advance. So if they dropped the arms for the 2000 soldiers and made a lot of noise from the planes, then the Chinese would step up their activities. So we did not allow them to drop nor was it dropped. Otherwise, they had everything ready in East Pakistan. Each plane was to carry arms for 1000 soldiers. Two planes were in East Pakistan. So the two of us stopped them and did not allow them to drop. They said they were going to drop tonight and the next day and to prepare for the drop zone. But we lost the first drop zone, then the second, then the third. So we couldn't find the men to stop the soldiers from escaping. You know, in war, once they started to escape, one keeps on escaping and it can't be stopped. If you cannot stop them for two days, we cannot give them the arms. So in this way, because of this danger, we could not drop the arms. Finally, all the arms were dropped in other places in Tibet later in 1960.

So when the Dalai Lama was at Lhuntse, they had planned to stay at Lhuntse for a few months. So I told drönyerchemmo, "The Dalai Lama should stay at a small secluded monastery where no one would know. Likewise, the two tutors and the Dalai Lama's mother should stay in another safe location. Because if you just dupe the Chinese and say that the Dalai Lama is staying at Lhutse Dzong in style and with all the soldiers, then if the Chinese start attacking, that's where they are going to shoot. We should stay ready to flee at the border like Tsöna or some other place. In Tibet, there are so many secluded hermitages and it will be easy to leave if things don't work out, right? So we said these things and it was pretty much decided on these matters. But in the meantime, it was Tsadora [Tib. tsha rdor ba] Khenjung and some kudras arrived at Lhuntse Dzong and said, "Oh, the Chinese have bombarded Norbulingka and Potala and killed so many people and this and that and all the kudras couldn't sit by and got all excited. It was around 1 a.m. in the morning when I was called to come. They said, "Oh, it's hopeless". I said, "Whats the matter?" They said "We cannot allow the Dalai Lama to stay like this and it has been decided that he will leave. On asking where you are going, they/he said to India; to escape through the border and so please ask the American government to contact the Indian government for assistance in entering Indian border. Then I said- I will send the late Chanju Jimpa [Tib. byang 'chub sbyin pa] and Jangra Lekshe [Tib. lchang ra legs bshad] who were sent by Gyalo Thöndup to the southern areas as a messenger and to take photographs and movies and they had passes to go down. So I will send two of them down to the place called Chudangmo [Tib. qu dwangs mo] where there are the Indians and we will also wire them. So this was agreed to and they were sent and I said to drönyerchemmo, "Please put everything in writing". And he gave this to me. said if they did not go to India then Nehru would be angry. So I said, "Alright, if you have decided to go, then go wherever you want. It doesn't make any difference where to go. Since it is decided, so please stick to it. You are definitely leaving tomorrow, right? [drönyerchemmo?] said, "Yes, we could not take the risk". I said I doubt that the danger is going to come immediately tomorrow. If they are firing cannons at Lhasa then you, who are all the way at Lhuntse, must flee? I said I don't think that there is all that danger. They said, "Oh no, we can't take such a risk". Now, I swear, all the kudras were made to feel that they could not even put their asses on the ground. There was Tsador Khenjung, who was wounded. So, I said, alright, that's it and it was like the closing of the second chapter. There wasn't anything to be done. So we immediately got ready for the Dalai Lama departure and I went to set the equipment and sent the wireless from the rooftop. Usually we don't send from the rooftop or close to people. So we said don't come around and frightened the people saying that if there is some fighting then they would get involved and then we sent the wireless message from the rooftop. Usually, we don't allow anybody to see and take it to the hills. So they said, "Okay, we will try and talk with the Indian government and so proceed as you have decided". So that was the last word. But they said that the two of you are not leaving right? You two do your best for the guerilla warfare and the you two cannot leave. We never had the any idea of leaving, we said. Gombo Tashi had not returned and Chushigandru people will not be abandoned, so don't worry we will not flee. We are only going to accompany the Dalai Lama to the border and then return. So they agreed. So the two of us accompanied the Dalai Lama to the border and when we got to Mamapur, there was no reply regarding a message. So I said to Phala Drönyerchemmo that we haven't received the wireless message so what to do. Even the ones who had gone earlier, there was no message from them. Then at night, as I was waiting the message came. So I immediately notified drönyerchemmo of the message which said that we have consulted with the Indian government and there is no problem, so please proceed as the Indian government will make all necessary preparations at the border. While we were going to drönyerchemmo to give the message the two that we had send earlier also arrived and the messages were in agreement and they had also received the order from the Indian to get prepared. So preparations were made to leave and that day, our soldiers received an audience. So that day whichever way I saw it, it seemed that the Tibetan government had nothing to carry with them. Actually, the Tibetan government has money, silver, gold, but no matter how hard I looked I didn't see that they had anything. So I said to drönyerchemmo, "What do you people have with you. Do you have diamond, gold, silver or money. I didn't see any loaded on the pack animals. All the horses were ridden and the mules had horse feed, tsamba, flour and some clothes given by the villagers. What do you have? The Tibetan government is going to India along with 37 people in the entourage. He said, "Nothing". So I said, "That is pretty hopeless or poor. [Tib. skyo po]" and he said that there was some gold at Gangtok which was left when the Dalai Lama was at Yadong and some of it was left behind; other than that there was nothing left. So when I asked him how he is going to meet the expenses on the road, he said that they had some trangga garpo, thats it. So I had two lakhs of Rupees and I said that it maybe wise to take this along. I will immediately wire America. This money was to send people to India for training and here in Tibet we need very little of it so it would be wise to take this money and I will wire America right away. He said, "Thank you, that would be wonderful". So I immediately wired and they said to give whatever they wanted. We will immediately arrange to sent you money if you need and arrange a plane for this, so go ahead and present it. So, I said, alright. At that time, the Kashag were [consisted of] Surkhang Wangchen Gelek, Phala Drönyerchemmo, Shasur, Liushar Thubten Tharpa [Tib. sne'u shar thub bstan thar pa], Gusung Dépön, Gadrang [Tib. dga' brang] and Taktra Dzasa. So all these the Tibetan government kudra were there. So I gave it in front of everyone and they flattered me like hell and said thank you so much and the two of you had made such exceptional preparations, made connections and gave us a good amount of money. They told me that later, after if Tibet gains independence then they would do a hell of a lot of things for me. Surkhang Wangchen Gelek was a great talker and said such great things. He said that they were going to give us as presents two mules. The mules would be brought from Mön Tawang. So, I said, okay. Later we didn't get the mules. They probably sent them but when the Tibetan government mules were to arrive we had left already. So we went to see the Dalai Lama and he said that when the two of you came to Tibet I

knew about it but I was in a very difficult situation and could not meet the two of you, so don't be upset about that. However, now we have become persons with one aim and mind. Then he presented to us the protective talisman, Jigje Mahe and a rosary and gave us wonderful advise that I haven't until forgotten and having done your best. So in this way the Dalai Lama went to India and the Tibetan government army and we all went to Lhuntse Dzong and Ei Chundokyang and arrived at Lhagyari. Andru Gombo Tashi had come to Lhagyari. The Chinese were advancing at such a speed that we didn't even have time to think. There wasn't anything that we could do. We tried to reestablish a regiment and people were coming from Lhasa and after the Dalai Lama had left people saw the escape route and knew there is a way out and then the monks of the three great monastery, Sendregasum and kudra and all sorts of monks and lay began to escape, then our soldiers saw the escape route and being opportunists [Tib. mgo bde po) and saying that they are going to fight here tonight, the next day they had fled some distance. And in this way, finally, territory was lost and everybody was shoved to India. So in India we were at Misamari. Gyalo Thöndup sent to fetch the two of us. So we came to Kador [Tib. ka rdor] [Kalimpong and Darjeeling] area. So at that place, the American teachers came to meet us.

Q: Where is this place called Kador?

A: Kador refers to Kalimpong and Darjeeling and they came to see us in Darjeeling.

Q: Oh, Oh, I see.

A: So they came to Darjeeling, about 3 of the American teachers. They gave Gombo Tashi an Omega watch and we both got a Rolex each and some gifts. They said that they were going to help us in whatever plans we had. Then they said what plans we had. They said that for two of us who were not at all educated, we did not expect you to do so much. On the one hand you did intelligence work, on the other you served and were useful to the Dalai Lama and you deserve to be applauded. So come to America and do some learning and we will give you a scholarship. So for a few years come for studies. The two of us had no wish to learn American language and hang around in America. So we said thank you very much but coming to America and learning your language we won't be able to do anything. We want to learn about fighting right now and improve on what we know and we want to go back to Tibet again and challenge the Chinese. Whats the use of studies and learning some language. We don't want to be interpreters. At that time, we only used to think that learning a language was only for interpreters. So they said that they will do what we want. So we took a break for a few months and then we said that we were coming to Colorado for the training camp. So they said that we must go there to lend assistance. On asking what help we could give, they said, "You had the experience in Tibet on sending wireless and everything else. The two of you were good in maps and setting the wireless and they said that the two of you need to teach the others and to come there". So we said alright and said that we also wanted to get trained, but not the same things as before but better things. So they said that they will teach us. So the two of us once again went to Colorado and stayed there for two and a half years, from 1959. Stayed there in 1960 and 1961 and returned in the beginning of 1962. There we were trained in driving tanks and took us to the camps and they treated us in a very special way. They took us to Washington and what's that place called, to New York, Chicago and so they took us to a number of places for sight seeing. At that time, since the two of us did not know any English we had to go where they took us since we would not know anything else. Last year, I came to the States and looked at Washington and other places, they had actually taken us to quite a lot of other places like Pentagon, Military Headquarter and allowed us to look. When I went last year and saw it myself, they had taken us all over. This year I took a tourist map and went to all the places that they took us. Then we returned to the camp and did the best we could on matters relating to parachuting into Tibet. So we stayed till 1962, up to the time that India and China went to war.

So while we were there, what the Americans did was this; we were the first group. The second group in Kham was Gyado Wangdü, you know my companions, the four persons. They were unable to be dropped and once again returned to Okinawa. When they were there for a month, our companion who had his leg shot had recovered. When the four were taken to be dropped, unfortunately the plane was too high and better wireless operator passed out for lack of oxygen. So they were unable to drop him and only the three parachuted; Gyadho Wangdü, his servant and Tsewang Dorje. The latter did not know the wireless very well. So because of this the three were not able to communicate very well and the Americans were unable to even drop one bullet into Kham. Gyadho Wangdü, when they were all there, one was killed where the other two were there and Bapa Jangra Tashi could not take the plane, so he was sent walking all the way from Kalimpong to Tibet and to Kham. He also got together with the group, but it was the time when the revolt was taking place and were not able to successfully do their work. They were not able to communicate with the Americans well and so not a bullet was dropped. The reason was that when they were fighting, the battle field had to be changed day and night and they had to move. In addition to that the communication was bad and so in Kham, the Americans were unable to help with even one bullet. In 1958, Gyado Wangdü, before we fled, in the winter of 1958, he came to Lhoka where we were. He was the only one who managed to flee. All together, including his relatives there were about 20 horsemen. Rattr Ngawang's relatives all together, there were about 20 horsemen from Litang. So Wangdü was able to escape. Three of our companions were killed in Kham. So that was the second group of our original group of 6 persons. Then there was a group of 16 people that we sent. In that group, there were about 9 persons who were dropped at Chang Namtsokha [Tib. byang gnam mtsho kha]. This is after we arrived[in India] in the latter part of 1959. There were many guerilla groups there. They didn't come across any fighting there, they came down to India via Mustang and returned to Colorado again. This was the third group. The 4th group was dropped at Jarapemba [Tib. lcags ra dpal 'bar]. In this group was Jagö Sé Dhonyö [Tib. bya rgod sras don yod] and there were about 10-11. This group was divided into two. Since there was guerilla fighting in the Northern areas in Dangkong [Tib. ?], a place in the Upper Regions of Kham, one group went there. At that time, there were numerous guerilla groups who were in revolt against the Communists. So, at Jarapemba, the Americans dropped a lot of arms and ammunitions. At this place called Damshung [Tib. 'dam gzhung] 5 people went, 4 Amdos and 1 Khamba. In addition to that the people who were dropped at Chang Namtsokha and who had returned to Colorado; from this group, 7 were dropped. In addition to that another 10 were dropped. They were trained in the use of bazuka to destroy tanks. I also went for this training. The reason was that we received a wireless message which stated that in the northern plains they were being chased all over by tanks and that they could not manage with guns. So the Americans immediately selected 10 people and trained them in the use of the bazuka. Later, when I asked some of the people who were sent there, they said that they were able to destroy a few tanks. So, how many groups was that? Sixth or something like that.

Once again at Jarapemba, 1 person was dropped. He was earlier with me who learned photography . and he trained well at

Colorado and was dropped at Jaarapemba. He was with Jagö Sé Dhonyö and others. He was an elderly person and was sent as "in charge". The 8th drop was probably at Markham. At Markham, there was Phurba Pön Yeshe Wangyal [Tib. phur pa dpon ye shes dbang rgyal] and two of my very best servants. Phurba Pön begged me to send them. These two could do anything. If you wanted them to carry loads, they could do an excellent job and if you wanted them to fight, they had the guts. So 6 persons were sent and 5 were killed. One had come to Dharamsala and he is called doctor, Emjila [Tib. em ji lags] or something and is now at the Tibetan Medical Astrological Institute. These days he is working at the Reception Center [Tib. sne len]. Previously, he was a Trapchi soldier of the Tibetan government. There were two soldiers; poor guy, one was killed. It is said that he could not take the poison. He had it somewhere around his mouth and the Chinese caught him. Everybody takes poison along when they are dropped.

Q: Cyanide, right?

A: Yes, if there is any danger, then one dies in 2 minutes. What happened, you don't have to tell the Chinese, right? So, this is the duty of intelligence work, right? After that, via land 4 fellow Litangpa were sent. Two were sent through Walung which is behind Darjeeling to Tingkye [Tib. gting skyes] Dzong. There, there was fighting and two were killed and two returned. So this is what I remember who were sent when I was in Colorado. .

Then, we returned from America and after this 100 persons were trained at Colorado. None of them were dropped in Tibet but I think they were spread in the Indian and Nepal borders. Then after some time, the Americans, Indian Intelligence and us, we worked together and established an office here at New Delhi. Something must have been done from this office but it wasn't very useful and they [Americans] didn't help properly too, I feel it became like neither harmful nor helpful [Tib. phan ned gnod med].

So at Colorado, altogether about 200 were trained. So this was part of the plan that we had originally submitted and to which they had agreed. After this, well, all this, to tell you the truth, Yabshi Trunyila, the person who was responsible for sending people and Gyalo Thöndup did all this. However, Gyalo Thöndup must have handled the larger issues and Trunyila is the best person who knows all the details, so I [answer not finished]

Q: Yes, I did meet him and did talk to him about this.

A: Yes, he is coming out with a book

Q: Yes, that's right.

A: So, until that comes out, I don't know if he will tell you all the details or not, but he will have all the details. After we fled he is the one who did all that and so he knows all the details. Now, I know all the details when I was in Colorado, about the various drops. Then later, he [Trunyila] took all the responsibilities of the intelligence work. So, whatever happened, he knows.

When I came to India, I stayed in Kolcutta making some contacts. But it was too hot and I took leave.

Q: So when was this?

A: In 1962 and 1963.

Q: Was there some work or groups in Kolcutta?

A: Why Kolcutta? Because at that time all the intelligence work related to Mustang was done through Kolcutta. There was no connection with the Indian government. After the 1962 Sino-Indian war, the relation with the Indian government started and then Kolcutta was closed and the starting of the 22nd "Regiment" and intelligence work with the Indians began. Before the Chinese attack, forget about allowing us to start a military camp, the Indian Intelligence had spies on us and made it difficult to do any work. They put difficulties on Gyalo Thöndup, on Andru Gombo Tashi and to everyone in the Chushigandru, to all of us. After the Chinese attack, they allowed us to form the 22nd Regiment and since they needed to know about the situation in Tibet, we all worked together. Up to 1971 or so, the Americans paid for all the expenses of the 22nd Regiment. All the training and arms were American.

Q: Even the 22nd Regiment?

A: Yes, and as far as the Mustang establishment, its well known. When we left Driguthang and fled to India the Chushigandru started the Mustang establishment. All the soldiers were sent from Gangtok to Mustang. When we went to America, Andru Gombo Tashi and Chushigandru sent them to the borders. The Americans fully helped them in this. In 1971 or so since the Americans and China came into good terms, the Americans stopped all the support to all the Anti-Communist organizations from Korea, Vietnam, Laos, to the smallest organization, our Mustang Organization. So from that time onwards the Americans cut off all relations with our intelligence work. They stopped from 1971.

Last time, I also told them that our relations were cut off from that time on. Sometimes I joke with them and give them a hard time and tell them that they brought over many people from Koreans, Vietnamese, Laoians, but our Khamba people are all over India having a difficult time making ends meet and so you must bring them over. Actually our leaders like Gyalo Thöndup were incapable, because if they wanted to they could have. Others had done it. At the least one to two thousand could have been sent to various places. Imagine how helpful that would have been. It would have been helpful for all patriotic Tibetans. It would have been helpful in education and financially for the government and for the people. But, they were not able to do that. Last year when I went to the states I regretted a lot because what I saw in the various cities were people from Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Koreans. And on enquiry how this came about I was told that it was because they previously had relations with the Americans and when the communist finally took over their countries they could not remain and asked the Americans and the Americans helped to bring them over. So when I look from this perspective, then we Khamba, around a thousand or more could have been brought over

if they had tried at that time. It was legally possible. For example, if I came to the States right now on a traveling document and once I got here and if I got rid of the document and said that I don't have anything, that I am such an such person who was associated with the US in the past. If I took this to the court most probably, they will have to let me stay. If I said that I cannot return, because if I did then the Chinese are "killing and cutting" [Tib. bsad btup] and my country is Tibet and so I don't have a place to go and I'm not going anywhere. They cannot do anything. Even, if it didn't come to that, they still could help. Where the Americans have helped was only the organization in Lo where they helped with a settlement. In terms of Indian currency it was about 60 lakhs. In today's terms, it's nothing, only about two to three hundred thousand dollars. So at that time, our leaders were incapable. Because if they were capable they could have said, "alright, if you are not going to help us militarily, they on a humanitarian basis we need help to settle these people". If they had said that and if they were able to bring in a thousand people, by now we could have had 5-10, 000 persons. Nothing like that was done. As I look at it now, our Chushigandru leaders do not have an education, right. Yes, so that's how it is.

The Chushigandru Organization from 1974 to 1975, after the Americans withdrew their support on our civil and military intelligence and the problem with the Nepalese began and Indian support was not very strong. The present 22nd Regiment is something that they just wanted to use and they did not allow us to do anything against the Chinese. So, the Chushigandru, up to 1974, all we ever thought about was how to fight the Chinese and fix them up. We never bothered about an education or a settlement or economics or anything else. Now, as I look at it today, we have fallen behind in all matters and when we now seek assistance it has already passed the stage of receiving assistance. They say we are not Tibetan refugees since it has been more than 30 odd years. So everything has become so late, right?. My God, today when I meet our elderly, about two to three hundred are coming with petitions saying we have to start an old people's home. The Tibetan government have nothing to give us and it is difficult to ask foreign countries. Everything has become so late. All the soldiers who were at Mustang and other places have all become old. Some of them got married and then died with young children. So when I look at all this, I see nothing but problems and nothing good has taken place.

So up to 1974, all I did was intelligence work.; in Nepal, in the Tibetan borders, the Mustang Organizations, matters both inside and outside Tibet. After, the Americans stopped that, I worked with the Indian government. Then I didn't have much interest. The Indian government was only concerned with their interest and did not do what we were interested in. What we request they do not listen. If they needed something then they will not hesitate to spend. Regarding our concerns they would not spend any. So I was not happy working for them. It's no use just being like a servant and so I took leave. So I took leave and looked after my own private concerns. Then the people of Dotö [Tib. mdo stod] voted me in for a three year term as the people's deputy from 1979-81. So since then I have been working for the Central Standing Committee of the Chushigandru [Tib. dbus rgyn las]. It has now been about 7 years since I was made the president of the organization and I have been here and trying to see if I could be of any help. Besides this, there doesn't seem anything else to do now. Earlier when I could do something I did the best that I could so now that's what I am doing and so there isn't much else to do. So I guess, that's it. That's what a story is, I guess.

Generally, regarding how the war was fought and how Gombo Tashi started the organization, there is the story written by Gombo Tashi himself and these days Chushigandru is also writing a book. It is being written down in Tibetan and it is more or less completed and has to be printed. It has been left in Dharamsala to be completed. . Even the story about intelligence, what was done previously, when I was in New York last year some of us Tibetans got together at the Office of Tibet and I told them a detailed account. They were very interested and the next day, Phündönla's [Tib. phun don lags] wife and Shakabpa's daughter, the wife of Sonam Wangdü [Tib. bsod nams dbang 'dus], asked me to speak to the younger kids one day. You have such strange things to say and to this day we have not heard anything like this. We have heard that something was done but what was done we don't know. When people come to ask us, we don't know what to say and we feel very ashamed of this. So last year, I told them the full account of how it was.

Even now it's like that. The Chushigandru Organization, and I know that the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government will always do things in the best interest of the Tibetan government, but the Chushigandru Organization, ever since the day of its inception till today, all we ever thought about was the total independence of the 3 provinces of Tibet and that we would never have to live under the Chinese; that we always wished to be free from such imperialism. For this purpose, earlier the Dalai Lama approved the Democratic Constitution of the Three Provinces of Tibet [Tib. bod chol kha gsum gyi dnamgs gtso'i rtsa khirms rin po che]. Till this day we have firmly believed that Dharamsala is the real government of the three provinces that this was the organization that carry the true interests of people inside and outside of Tibet, that whatever difficulties have to be suffered that we will suffer along with this government. There maybe one or two persons who may disagree with this but 90% of the people have this belief. So even our Chushigandru Organization, that's the only basis upon which we work. Nothing else. At one time, the Dalai Lama was making things more fluid [Tib. sla ru] and when sometimes when I think about this one gets very disappointed. If one makes things more fluid and if the Chinese were to take things into consideration, that's one thing. But the Chinese only make things worse and worse and never better. When I was a deputy of the people's assembly they made relations . That was in 1980. By 1983 the Chinese, did not say a word. The Dalai Lama, like ordinary people, no matter how much he lowered himself and like a price, no matter how low he brought it, the Chinese never changed even a word. Just now they have distributed something called the White Papers or White Book, or something like that. They said that there was one in Tibetan and another in the German language. They were bringing it from there, from Germany. It's just amazing. The Tibetan government was trying to make the relation and lowering their voice. It's true what they have said earlier, that Gyalo Thöndup and I are friends. It's not a situation where I have requested things- he has not given me one red penny but from similar point of view we have worked together. But last year, this guy was being so fluid; strange, what was he up to? Such an able leader he is and thought he would be good for the independence of Tibet and thought that he was something. When he was appointed as kalön, I was a deputy of the Dotö. I said that he must be voted in. That it would be good to vote for him. That he is really a person who has worked hard previously. That he would get things done for Tibet, that he is a relative of the Dalai Lama. I thought that he would really do things well and never even thought otherwise. Now he went to America and Canada and to China and wherever he went he said all contrary things. He went to China and made relations with them, relations that had no substance. So as I look at it and see what was the reason and plan, I don't see any. So I feel very disappointed about this and I openly speak out. Some here say that I speak out against him. I say that I speak out not because I don't have anything to eat or drink but that it is for the sake of all Tibetans. I say that I don't think there was reason to so

immediately cry out .

The world has in the last ten years pushed for the sake of Tibet. Within those ten years the last 3 years or so there was quite a strong support. We, on the other hand are getting more fluid or meeker and meeker. So whats the reason. Inside Tibet, the people including the Khamba and Amdo have so much faith ,belief and hope in the Dalai Lama. You know we never used to do that before when Tibet was fully independent. I know that, they never had that faith and belief. Now they have seen suffering and they have been beaten and beaten and they have only one hope. That the Dalai Lama has gone to a foreign land and with him many Tibetans and they are shouting worldwide for the independence of Tibet. So because of this they are treating us with some decency. So that is one thing that they have the faith in their minds. Secondly, when they come to beat their heads they think that the Dalai Lama is abroad in a foreign land and he and the Tibetans will do something, that they will alleviate our sufferings. So this is the sentiments of the Tibetans in Tibet. If we went over to them then thats the end. Today our young men who have never laid their eyes on the Chinese nor know nothing about them say whats the use of just staying outside and talking, we must go inside and once we go there we can do anything. How will they allow such things? From that day, they [Chinese] will say that the Dalai Lama has to go and stay in China. They will give him the rank of a minister and that too of the Central Government and say that he has to be where the Central Government is and cannot stay in Tibet. How was Panchen Lama kept? He will be kept like him. The moment we have to live under the Chinese communist party leaders will have all the power and we may or may not have fancy titles. If we try to get power from the party, the whole area is surrounded by soldiers and whatever we try to do, isn't that the end? I say, who will let that happen? For example, if I went to my country and had some ideas and started making some moves, one day whether they say things nicely or harshly they will definitely fix me up. What can people do in my country do? Nothing, whatsoever. If somebody from the outside start interfering they will tell them to mind their own business since this is an internal affair and so shut up. So who is going to come to our rescue? So, whether we succeed or not we to have to stay on this land and try. We have a Khamba saying, "This is the place where we have to push against our feet" [Tib. rkang pa bkan bkan bzo sa]. Otherwise, the day we go back in, they will put the Dalai Lama in some spot and the moment the people begin to raise their heads they will beat them down. So who is going to raise their heads? Just now in Tibet, can they raise their heads? Maybe there are some. There are all sorts of people but they cannot raise their heads. The moment you raise it they will fix you right. Even a few nuns who go around in the Bharkor shouting for independence are arrested and put in prison for 10 years. So, whats there to be done? Nothing! If there is, then do it.

Recently, the Dalai Lama did not say much. But at one time, he was saying as if things were quite simple. He said a lot of things about Strousburg 5 point proposal but we thought, how strange was it. So even when it is concerned with Chushigandru, we still don't allow our principle to be lost.